

JULY
No. 14

Combined with **CRIME SMASHERS**

CRIME MYSTERIES

10¢



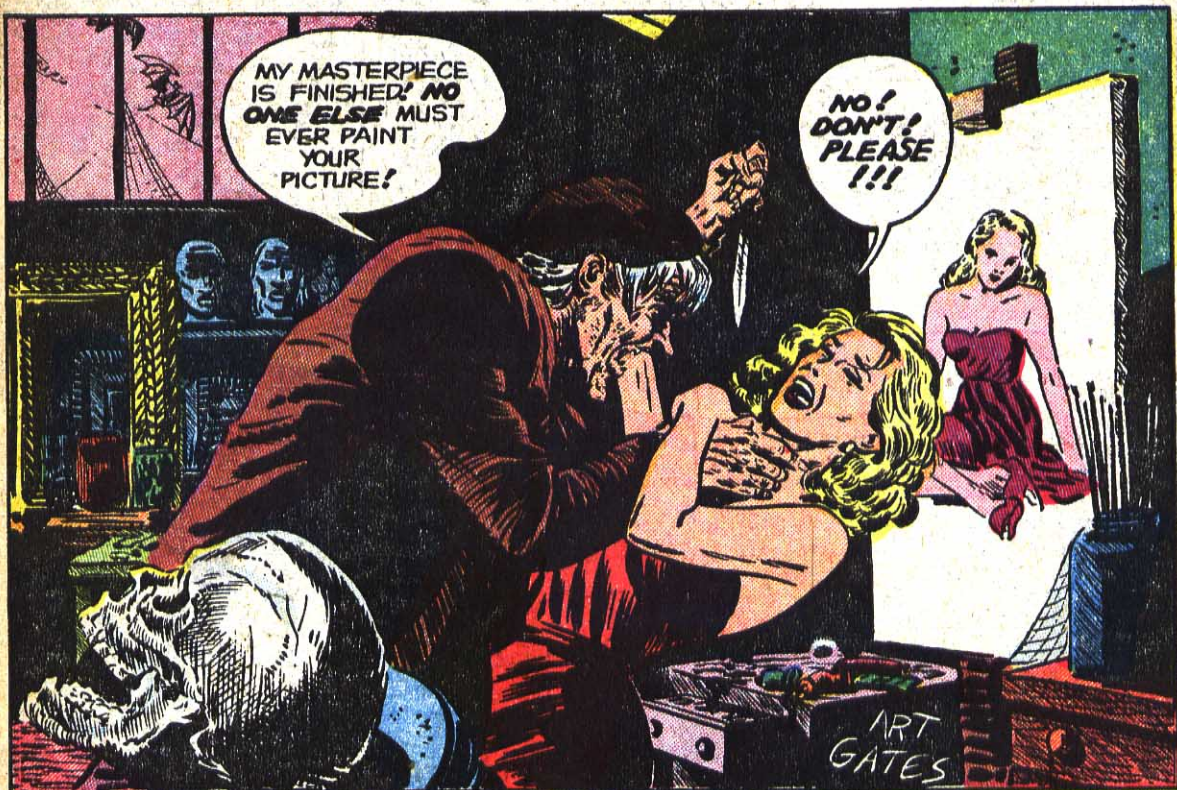
Read: **"PAINTED IN BLOOD"**



WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM

JANE ANDREWS, YOUNG, BEAUTIFUL AND HEIRESS TO A SUBSTANTIAL FORTUNE, HAS INCURRED THE DISPLEASURE OF HER LEGAL GUARDIAN THAD PARKS BY MARRYING ROY RADFORD, A TALENTED BUT POOR YOUNG ARTIST. CAN LOVE ALONE OVERCOME ALL OBSTACLES AND LEAD TO FAME AND FORTUNE? OR WILL STRANGE AND SINISTER FORCES WRECK THE LIVES OF THIS COUPLE? HOW HORRIBLY CAN ART BE TWISTED WHEN ROY FINDS OUT THAT THE MAGNIFICENT PORTRAIT IS...

PAINTED *in* BLOOD



THE DEFIANT BRIDE PAYS A VISIT TO THE OFFICE OF HER DISAPPROVING GUARDIAN...

I THINK YOUR MARRIAGE WAS A FRIGHTFUL MISTAKE, JANE, YOU WILL REGRET IT SOME DAY.

NO, I WON'T, MR. PARKS. SOME DAY ROY WILL BE FAMOUS. WHAT'S MORE, I LOVE HIM.



ALL RIGHT, I GIVE UP. INCIDENTLY, I OWN A HOUSE IN TAPPAN FALLS WITH A MARVELOUS STUDIO. FELLOW NAMED SLADE USED TO OCCUPY IT. YOU TWO CAN USE IT IF YOU WISH.

AT LAST YOU'RE ACTING HUMAN, FINE! WE'LL ACCEPT IT WITH THANKS. ROY CAN WORK QUIETLY THERE AND I WILL KEEP HOUSE FOR HIM.



SEVERAL DAYS LATER, LATE IN THE AFTERNOON, JANE AND ROY DRIVE TO THE NEW STUDIO...



WE'RE ENTERING TAPPAN FALLS NOW, HONEY.

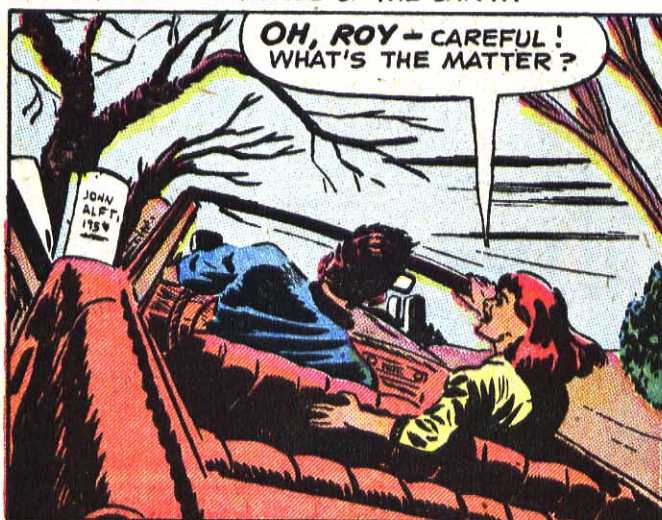
LET'S STOP SOMEWHERE AND ASK DIRECTIONS TO THE HOUSE.

THEY PAUSE AT A LOCAL GAS STATION...



YOU WANT TO GO TO THE SLADE HOUSE - THAT PLACE? YOU'RE NUTS TO GO THERE, BUT IF YOU MUST, IT'S JUST PAST THAT CEMETERY.

WHILE DRIVING PAST THE OLD CEMETERY ROY NEARLY LOSES CONTROL OF THE CAR...



OH, ROY - CAREFUL! WHAT'S THE MATTER?

YOU LOOK AS IF YOU SAW A GHOST.

NO - NO -- IT'S NOTHING.



BUT FEARING TO ALARM JANE, ROY DOES NOT REVEAL THAT HE DID SEE SOMETHING -- SOMETHING HORRIBLE SLINKING AMONG THE MOULDERING HEADSTONES OF THE GRAVEYARD...

ROY SHAKEN AND JANE WORRIED, THEY SOON PULL UP IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE THEY HAVE COME TO OCCUPY. ALL IS DARK AND QUIET...



YOU WAIT IN THE CAR WHILE I LOCATE THE CARETAKER.

ALL R-RIGHT, BUT PLEASE HURRY BACK, ROY.



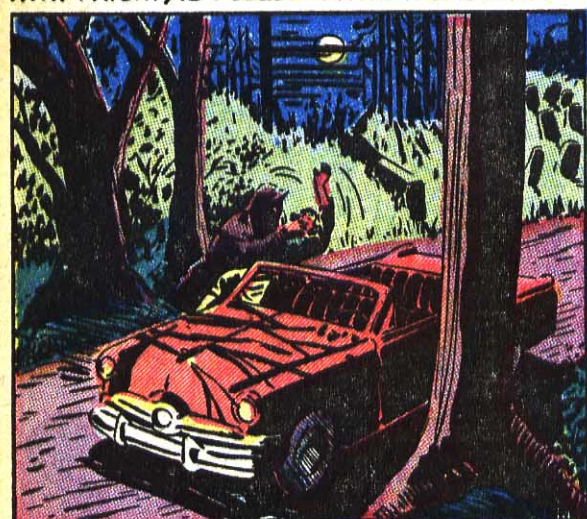
DARKNESS CLOSES IN AND JANE SHIVERS APPREHENSIVELY AS SHE WAITS FOR ROY'S RETURN...



SUDDENLY SHE LOOKS INTO THE MIRROR AND SEES AN APPARITION THAT FREEZES HER IN COLD HORROR...



IN AN INSTANT LATER, THE GIRL, PETRIFIED WITH FRIGHT, IS PULLED FROM THE CAR...



...AND CARRIED BY THE FEARSOME FIGURE INTO THE EERIE DARKNESS UP THE ROAD...



WITH A FRANTIC EFFORT, JANE BREAKS THE CREATURE'S HAND FROM HER MOUTH AND SCREAMS BEFORE LAPSING INTO A FAINT...

BACK OF THE HOUSE ...

ROY RUNS BACK TO THE CAR...



CAN'T FIND THAT CARE-TAKER. WHERE CAN HE BE? I--



SHE'S GONE! JANE! JANE!!



JUST THEN A LITTLE OLD MAN APPEARS...

ARE YOU CROSBY, THE CARETAKER?

YES, THAT'S ME. I'VE BEEN EXPECTIN' YOU, BUT NOT SO LATE. NOBODY COMES HERE AFTER DARK.



I LEFT MY WIFE HERE IN THE CAR. NOW SHE HAS DISAPPEARED. CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING?

MANY STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN AT THIS HOUSE. COME INSIDE—



INSIDE THE GLOOMY HOUSE...

BUT AS ROY USES THE INSTRUMENT, AN EERIE VOICE MOCKS HIM...

PHONE DOWN TO THE VILLAGE. MAYBE SHE WENT BACK THERE.



HELLO—THIS IS ROY RADFORD AT THE SLADE HOUSE. IS MY WIFE--?

SHE'S GONE! GONE TO THE GRAVE! (CACKLE—CACKLE—)



THE PHONE -- IT'S HAUNTED!



THE NIGHT'S BLACKER'N A WITCH'S KETTLE. HE'S OUT O' HIS GRAVE AGAIN. NO WONDER SHE'S BLEEDIN'.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHO'S BLEEDING?

THE PORTRAIT—THE ONE SLADE WAS PAINTIN' WHEN HE STABBED HIS MODEL TO DEATH AND THEN COMMITTED SUICIDE. I BURIED 'EM BOTH BUT NIGHTS WHEN IT'S DARK HE RISES OUT O' HIS GRAVE AND THE PICTURE BLEEDS. COME—I'LL SHOW YOU--



IN ANOTHER ROOM...

SHE'S BEAUTIFUL,
BUT WHAT'S THAT
RED - IS IT
REALLY--?



IT IS
BLOOD!
YEP -
BLEEDIN'
RIGHT
WHERE
HE STABBED
HER.

THIS PLACE IS PECULIAR,
BUT WHERE IS JANE? I'VE
GOT TO FIND HER!



**As ROY GOES THROUGH THE DOORWAY, A
HEAVY OBJECT CRASHES AGAINST HIS SKULL...**



UGH!

**MEANWHILE, JANE RE-
VIVES TO FIND HERSELF
IN A LARGE ROOM...**



OH-H! WHERE AM I?

IT'S A STUDIO, ALL SET
UP FOR PAINTING --



THEN THE AWESOME FIGURE REAPPEARS...



EEE-EEE-EE-

WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I HAVE COME BACK FROM THE GRAVE, MY FINGERS ITCH FOR MY BRUSHES. EVERYTHING IS READY... YOU WILL POSE FOR ME.



NO! NO!
LET ME ALONE!

YOU WON'T GET AWAY! MY MODELS NEVER GET AWAY FROM ME--HA! HA!!



DO AS I TELL YOU! SIT HERE AND STAY STILL SO I CAN WORK. -AND WHEN I'M THROUGH YOU'LL BE STILL FOR A LONG TIME-- JUST LIKE MY OTHER MODEL. STILL AS THE GRAVE-HEE! HEE!



THE OLD CARETAKER INTERRUPTS...

YOU FOOL! YOU'RE TAKIN' CHANCES. IF I WAS YOU--

SHUT UP! YOU CAN'T STOP ME NOW. I'VE GOT A MODEL - THE CANVAS IS READY--



GET OUT OF MY WAY!

OW!



As THE HURT OLD MAN CRAWLS AWAY...

NOW I'LL PAINT MY GREATEST MASTERPIECE OF ALL!

OH, WHERE IS ROY? WHERE CAN HE BE---



CONTINUED ON PAGE AFTER NEXT...

NOW YOU CAN FLY A REAL JET PLANE!



JETEX F-102

SPECIAL OFFER

If bought in the store, the Jetex #50 engine alone would cost \$1.95; the Jetex F-102 \$9.95, a total cost of \$2.90.

Rush the coupon and you get both the Jetex F-102 and the Jetex #50 jet engine for only \$1.98 (plus postage and handling charges, C.O.D.)

\$1.98

Includes fuel supply

GUARANTEED TO FLY!

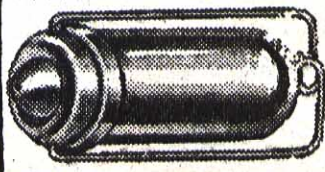
The Jetex F-102 is unconditionally guaranteed to fly if all instructions have been faithfully followed. If the Jetex F-102 does not fly, return the plane and the engine within 10 days for full refund.

FLASH!

As of this printing, the U.S. Air Force's F-102 does not have a name, because this supersonic airplane is brand new and still in the category of a military secret. The Jetex F-102 is the first model of its kind.

AMAZING JETEX #50 JET ENGINE

The world's smallest jet engine and the most powerful engine of its size ever sold! Operates at a jet exhaust speed of 800 miles per hour. Runs on solid fuel, starts every time, completely reliable. NO MOVING PARTS TO BREAK OR WEAR OUT. Can be used to power model airplanes, racing cars and boats.



JETEX F-102 HUNTINGTON, N. Y.

- Complete with Jet Engine
- Genuine Balsa Wood

You'll thrill and amaze your friends, be the envy of the neighborhood with this real JET airplane. It looks like a real jet, flies like one, even sounds like an actual jet plane. It will fly amazing distances at scale supersonic speed. The Jetex F-102 takes off under its own power, loops, circles, stunts and glides to a beautiful landing. As it flies, this beautiful model leaves a trail of white smoke just like a real jet.

The Jetex F-102 is a cinch to build. Comes complete with the famous Jetex #50 jet engine and all parts already cut out. Nothing more to buy! Just follow the easy instructions, glue the parts together and you're ready for thrill! This amazing jet airplane is made of GENUINE Balsa wood throughout. Its special construction gives it terrific strength and durability and with ordinary care the Jetex F-102 will give hundreds of fun-filled flights.

It's fun to assemble, thrilling to fly. So don't delay—SEND NO MONEY—rush your order today to be sure of prompt delivery.

NOW THERE ARE MORE THAN
100,000 DELIGHTED JETEX USERS!

MAIL THIS COUPON NOW!

JETEX F-102 Dept. AJ-13 HUNTINGTON, N. Y.

Please rush the JETEX F-102 and JETEX #50 jet engine. I will pay postman only \$1.98 plus C.O.D. charges on arrival.

Name _____
(please print)

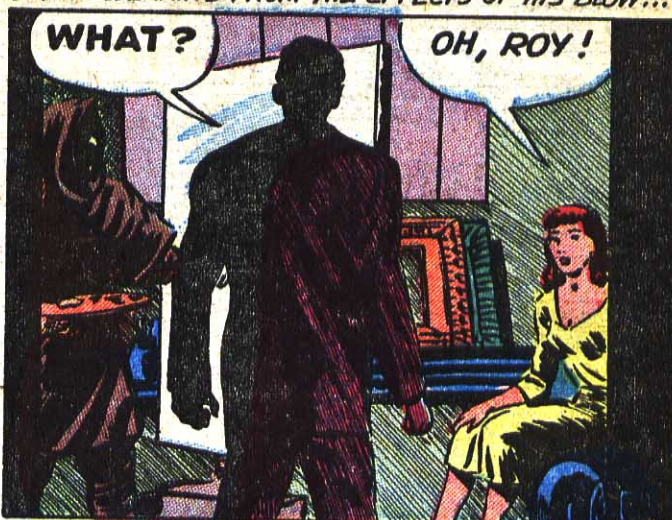
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City _____ Zone _____ State _____

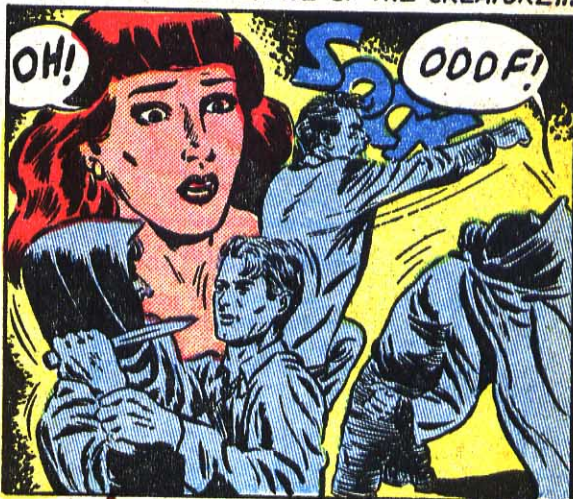
☐ I enclose \$2.00 in cash, check or money order to save on C.O.D. charges. If the airplane does not fly, I may return it in 10 days for full refund of purchase price.

DOWNSTAIRS, THE CARETAKER ROUSES THE BATTERED YOUNG HUSBAND...

ROY LEAPS UP THE STAIRS TO THE STUDIO ROOM, HIS BRAIN CLEARING FROM THE EFFECTS OF HIS BLOW...



ROY STRUGGLES FURIOUSLY WITH THE MYSTERIOUS FIGURE, INTENT ONLY ON FREEING HIS WIFE FROM THE MENACE OF THE CREATURE...



FINALLY ROY GETS HIS FINGERS ON HIS FOE'S THROAT AND THE COWL FALLS OFF THE VANQUISHED MAN, REVEALIN A TWISTED FACE, CHALKY WITH THE PALLOR OF DEATH...





OH, DARLING, WHAT NIGHTMARE IS THIS?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S BEHIND IT ALL, BUT YOU'RE SAFE NOW. THAT'S THE MAIN THING.

A VOICE BOOMS FROM THE STAIRS...

ROY!-- JANE!--



... AND THAD PARKS, JANE'S GUARDIAN, COMES RUSHING IN ...

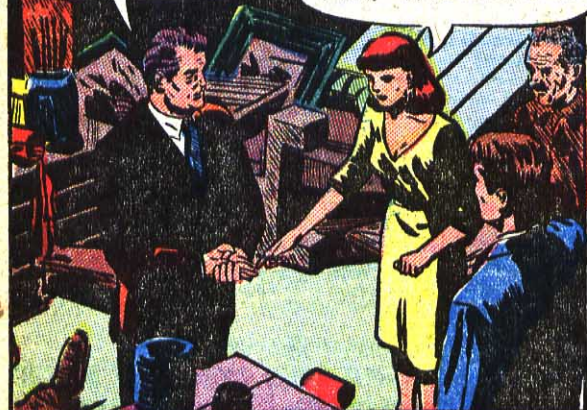
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? THANK HEAVEN YOU'RE NOT HURT!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?



I'M SORRY I SENT YOU YOUNG PEOPLE UP HERE. I KNEW THIS WAS A HOUSE OF HORROR, BUT I DID NOT APPROVE OF YOUR MARRIAGE AND I THOUGHT I COULD BREAK IT UP.

BUT WHO IS THIS MAN - THIS MONSTER?



THAT'S JOHN SLADE, THE ARTIST. HE NEVER COMMITTED SUICIDE AFTER MURDERING HIS MODEL. HE WENT CRAZY AND OLD CROSBY HERE, WHO IS HIS UNCLE, KEPT HIM HERE AND SHIELDED HIM FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD. CROSBY SPREAD THE STORY THAT THE HOUSE WAS HAUNTED.



BUT THE BLOOD ON THE PAINTING?

I DID THAT. I RIGGED UP A RUBBER TUBE AND DRIPPED CHICKEN BLOOD ON THE PICTURE. SLADE PLUGGED INTO THE PHONE LINE FOR THE GHOST VOICE. WE DID THIS WHENEVER PEOPLE CAME HERE AND HAD THEM TERRORIZED. BUT HE RUINED IT ALL WHEN HE STOLE YOUR WIFE AND HIT YOU.



OH, ROY - I HAD HOPED THAT YOU WOULD PAINT SUCH BEAUTIFUL PICTURES HERE - THAT WE WOULD BE SO HAPPY--

NEVER MIND, HON. THE WORLD IS A BIG PLACE AND WE'LL FIND A MUCH BETTER STUDIO AND BE HAPPY SOMEWHERE ELSE.



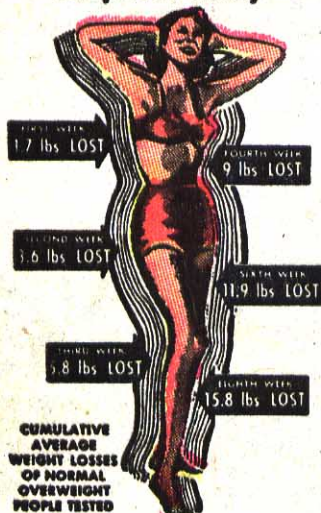
THE END

New Reducing "Miracle"

"DROPEX" REDUCING COCKTAIL

**Proved by Doctors to Reduce Weight
9 lbs. in 4 weeks...15 lbs. in 2 months!
No drugs . . . No pills . . . No diets**

Clinical Tests Prove "DROPEX" Reducing Cocktail Drops Fat Away



If you want to lose 9 to 15 pounds, here's the easiest way to do it. Don't go on a special diet—just add a dropful of the new "DROPEX" Reducing Cocktail to your favorite drink before each meal to lose 2 lbs. each week.

"DROPEX" Reducing Cocktail has been proven by doctors who tested it on a group of normal overweight men and women. The doctors' tests showed a safe steady reduction of weight every week with "DROPEX" Reducing Cocktail. In 4 weeks the average person lost 9 lbs. In 2 months 15½ lbs. of fat were lost. Every one lost weight with "DROPEX".

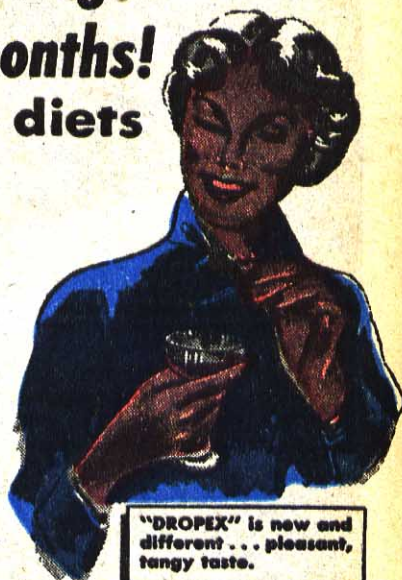
If you want to lose 9 to 15 lbs., get "DROPEX" Reducing Cocktail today.

We Guarantee your money back if "DROPEX" does not reduce your weight without any special diets.

Absolutely Harmless!

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

If you want to lose 9 to 15 lbs. We guarantee your money back if "DROPEX" does not reduce your weight WITHOUT ANY SPECIAL DIETS!



"DROPEX" is new and different . . . pleasant, tangy taste.

"DROPEX" is pleasant. Add it to your favorite drink or plain water

Entirely different from anything you have ever tried! Stop crying the overweight blues. Start today on the new safe simple "DROPEX" way to lose pounds of ugly fat. Simply add "DROPEX" as directed to fruit or vegetable juice, soft drinks, alcoholic beverages or plain water. The new "DROPEX" is easy, simple, an effective way to lose weight.

ENTIRELY DIFFERENT FROM ANYTHING YOU HAVE EVER TRIED!

Add "DROPEX" to fruit or vegetable juice, soft drinks, alcoholic beverages or plain water.

In clinical tests on both men and women, EVERY overweight person reduced with

"DROPEX"

Reducing Cocktail 298

Copyright 1933. Dillon, Inc.

In Doctor-Checked Tests "DROPEX" REDUCED EVERY OVERWEIGHT PERSON! —Without Dieting, Without Exercises

"DROPEX" Reducing Cocktail was carefully tested on a group of overweight men and women. The results from taking "DROPEX" delighted the doctors supervising the tests, as well as the overweight men and women. Many of the people who took "DROPEX" had used other products without success, but every one lost weight with "DROPEX". The average weight loss was 2 pounds a week over an eight week period.

All the overweight persons did was to add a dropful of "DROPEX" to their favorite drink before each meal. No diets or special eating plans were used. The doctors gave sole credit for the easy steady loss of excess weight to the use of "DROPEX".

"DROPEX" Reducing Cocktail is sold on an iron-clad guarantee. You must be pleased, or you get your money back. You have nothing to lose but fat—so easily, so safely, so pleasantly.

CHARM COMPANY, Dept. AG-5

400 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y.

Please send me _____ bottles of DROPEX REDUCING COCKTAIL, at \$2.98.

- ☐ Send C.O.D. I will pay postman plus postal charges.
☐ I enclose payment. You pay postage.
☐ Send 3 bottles for \$6.00 (1 free when you buy 2)

Name _____

Address _____

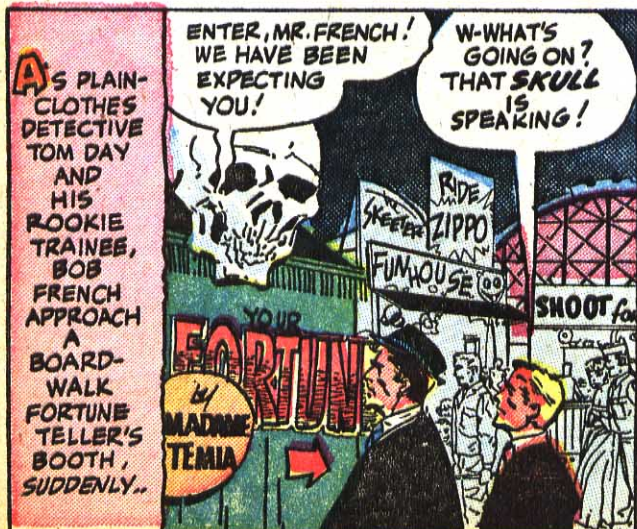
City _____ Zone _____ State _____

CROSS A GYPSY'S PALM



AH YES, DETECTIVE DAY...
YOUR FUTURE BECOMES
CLEAR TO ME... UNFORTUNATELY
CLEAR.. I CAN SEE YOU
WILL **NEVER** LEAVE
THIS ROOM **ALIVE!**

THE GYPSY'S UPTURNED HAND BECKONED
IN THAT DIM-LIT, EERIE ROOM!
DETECTIVE DAY PLACED HIS HAND IN HERS,
LITTLE SUSPECTING YOU SHOULD...
**NEVER CROSS A GYPSY'S
PALM!**



AS PLAIN-
CLOTHES
DETECTIVE
TOM DAY
AND HIS
ROOKIE
TRAINEE,
BOB
FRENCH
APPROACH
A
BOARD-
WALK
FORTUNE
TELLER'S
BOOTH,
SUDDENLY..

ENTER, MR. FRENCH!
WE HAVE BEEN
EXPECTING
YOU!

W-WHAT'S
GOING ON?
THAT **SKULL**
IS
SPEAKING!

VENTRILLOQUISM... MY PET HOBBY,
FRENCH! ~ HERE'S THE GYPSY'S
BOOTH! YOU KNOW THE COMPLAINT..
CUSTOMERS COME AWAY FROM PALM
READINGS AND SEANCES MINUS THE
MONEY IN THEIR WALLETS OR POCKET-
BOOKS! SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN
SHE TELLS YOUR FORTUNE ~ I'LL
WATCH!



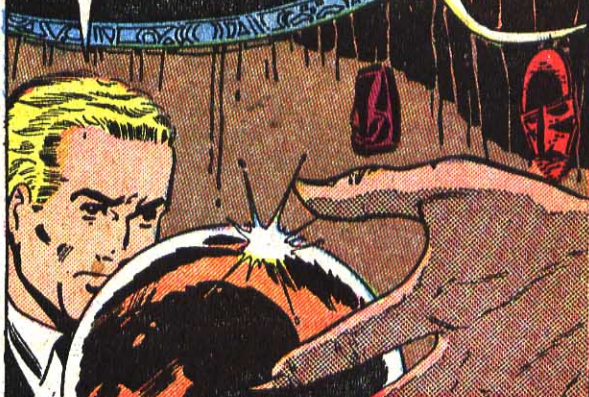
THE YOUNG ROOKIE PUSHES ASIDE THE THICK WAITING-ROOM CURTAINS AND ENTERS THE GLOOMY ROOM, A TONELESS VOICE SPEAKS ...

PUT A DOLLAR ON THE TABLE! THEN SIT DOWN AND PUT YOUR PALM IN MINE!



HERE'S MY HAND!... I-I'VE BEEN KIND OF WORRIED ABOUT MY GIRL...

YOU NEED NOT TELL ME, I CAN SEE YOUR LOVE LINE IS TROUBLED!



AH, I SEE ANOTHER MAN, A RIVAL... BUT DO NOT FEAR HIM... I SEE HIM LEAVING HER...

SO FAR, NO SIGN OF ANY MONKEY BUSINESS! THE GYPSY HAS HIS HAND, BUT NO ONE'S COME OUT OF THE SHADOWS TO LIFT HIS WALLET!



A MINUTE LATER, THE MUMBO-JUMBO ENDS AND AS ROOKIE FRENCH LEAVES, THERE IS A WHISPERED EXCHANGE ...

NOTHING!

I'LL GO IN!... WATCH!



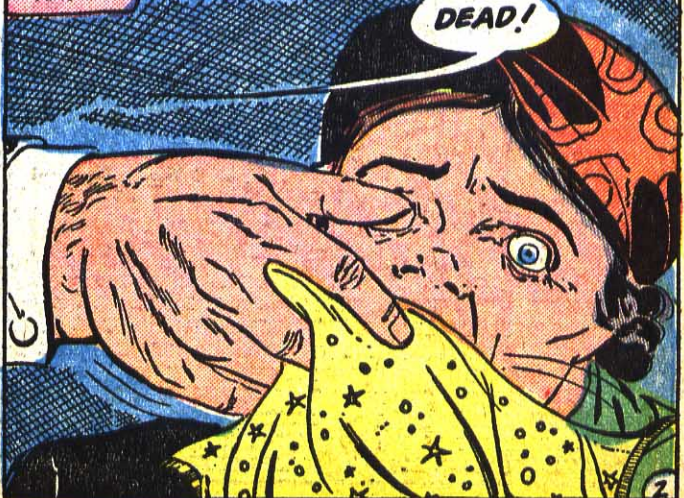
DETECTIVE DAY ENTERS THE SILENT MACABRE ROOM, PUTS A DOLLAR ON THE TABLE AND PLACES HIS HAND IN THE GYPSY'S UPTURNED PALM...

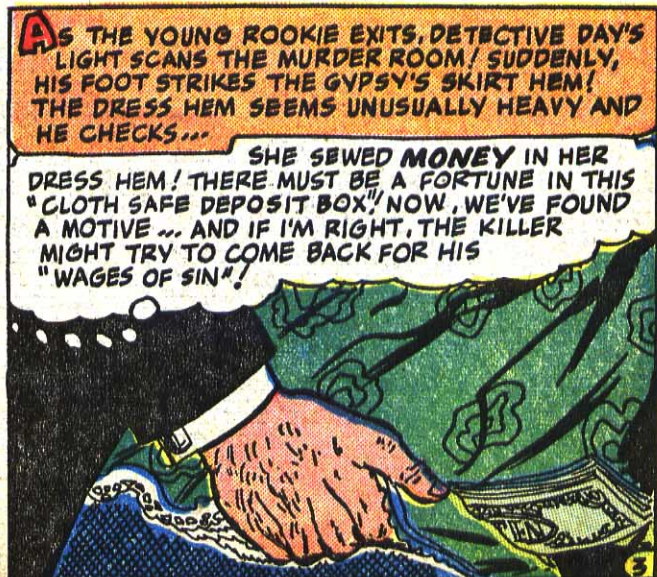
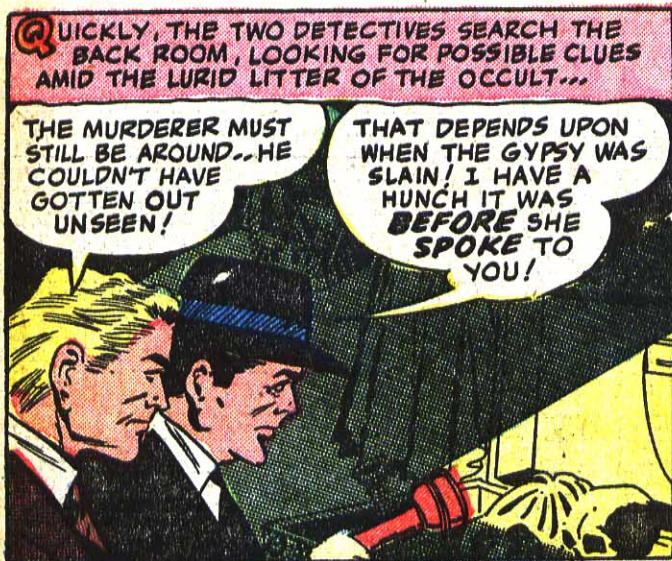
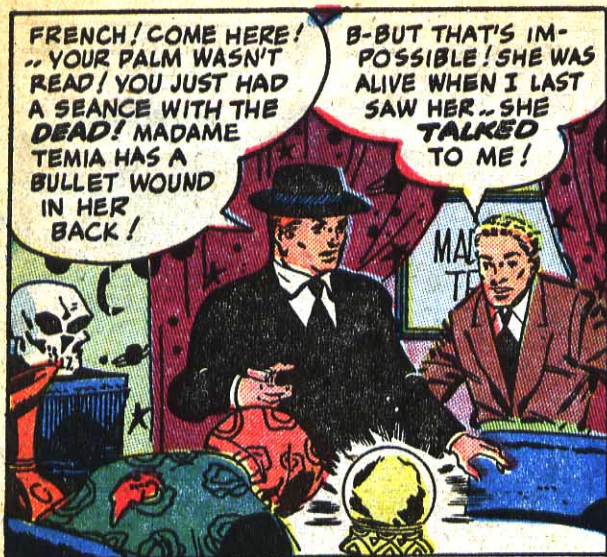
YOUR HAND IS RATHER COLD, MADAME TEMIA! DOES THAT MEAN YOU HAVE A WARM HEART? ...MADAME TEMIA... WHAT'S WRONG?... ANSWER ME?



BUT THERE IS NO ANSWER AND DETECTIVE DAY LEANS FORWARD, SWEEPING BACK THE MUTE GYPSY'S VEIL...

DEAD!





A PHONE.. THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA! IF THE KILLER'S AROUND, I'LL TRY TO BAIT THE TRAP TO LURE HIM OUT OF HIDING!

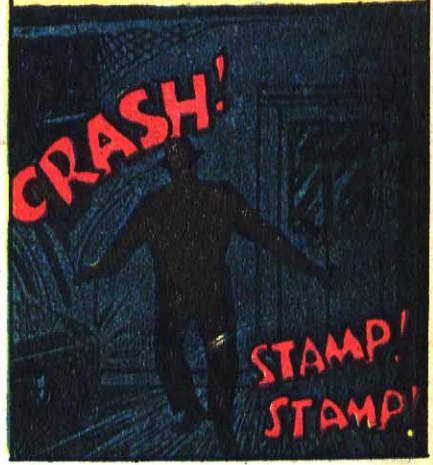


QUICKLY, DETECTIVE DAY DIALS AND THEN SPEAKS IN A LOUD VOICE...

CHIEF, THERE'S NOTHING MORE HERE FOR ME! LET THE HOMICIDE BOYS TAKE OVER! I'LL GO OUTSIDE AND KEEP THE CROWDS AWAY!



NOISILY, DETECTIVE DAY FAKES AN EXIT, SNAPPING OFF HIS FLASHLIGHT...



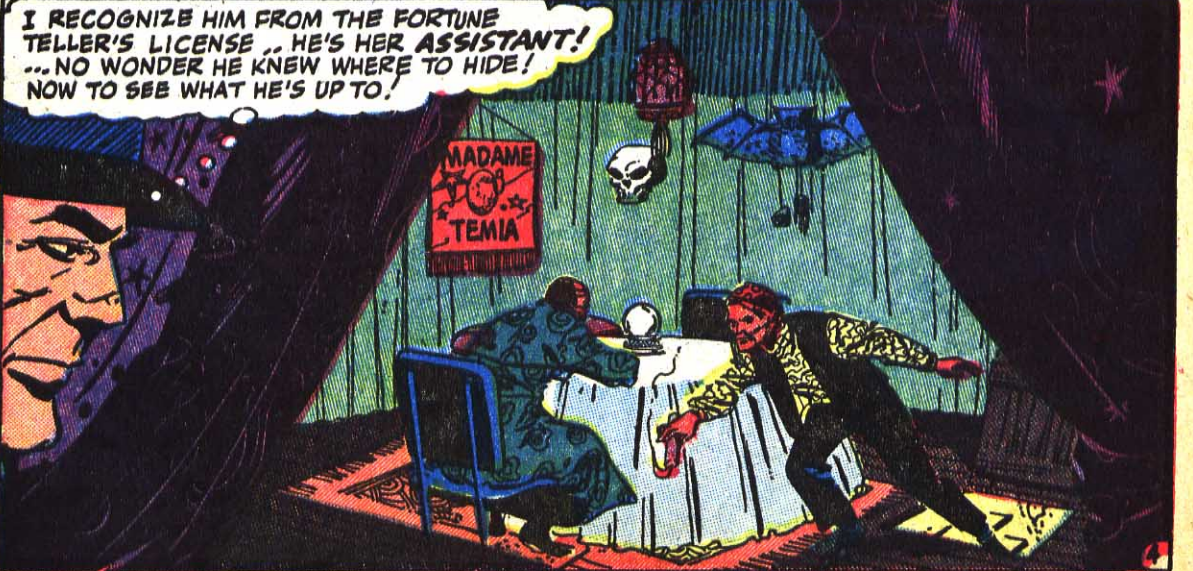
IF ANYONE'S BEEN HIDING AROUND HERE, HE'LL HAVE HEARD ME GO OUT.. BUT HE WON'T SEE OR HEAR ME RETURN TO WATCH THE MAIN ROOM!



TWO SILENT MINUTES SLOWLY PASS! THEN SUDDENLY.. THERE IS A MOVEMENT IN THE ROOM NEAR THE STILL SEATED CORPSE! DETECTIVE DAY PEERS THRU THE CURTAINS, AS A TRAP DOOR IS FURTIVELY RAISED....



I RECOGNIZE HIM FROM THE FORTUNE TELLER'S LICENSE .. HE'S HER ASSISTANT! ...NO WONDER HE KNEW WHERE TO HIDE! NOW TO SEE WHAT HE'S UP TO!



AS THE CANDLE THROWS EERIE SHADOWS ABOUT THE MURDER ROOM, THE ASSISTANT STARTS TO RIP THE DEAD GYPSY'S DRESS HEM...

HE'S AFTER THE MONEY! I'VE GOT THE MOTIVE, BUT I COULD SAVE A LOT OF TIME WITH A CONFESSION! MAYBE I CAN GET ONE... WITH **VENTRILOQUISM!**



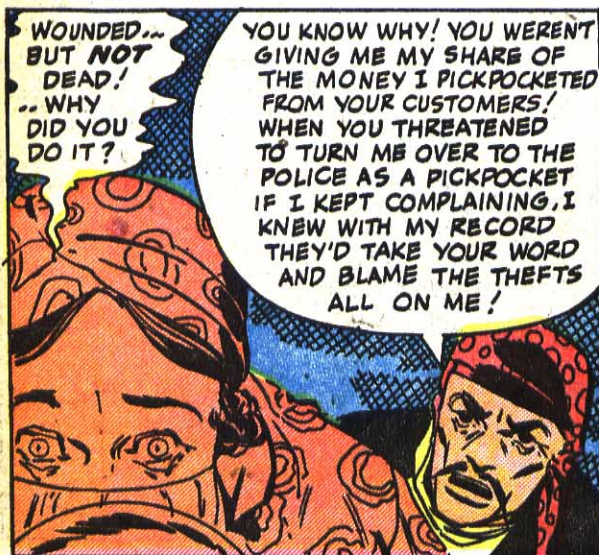
WHY.. WHY DID YOU TRY TO KILL ME?

N-NO!.. NO! IT CANNOT BE.. Y-YOU ARE.. DEAD!



WOUNDED... BUT **NOT DEAD!**... WHY DID YOU DO IT?

YOU KNOW WHY! YOU WEREN'T GIVING ME MY SHARE OF THE MONEY I PICKPOCKETED FROM YOUR CUSTOMERS! WHEN YOU THREATENED TO TURN ME OVER TO THE POLICE AS A PICKPOCKET IF I KEPT COMPLAINING, I KNEW WITH MY RECORD THEY'D TAKE YOUR WORD AND BLAME THE THEFTS ALL ON ME!



I DECIDED TO LEAVE! I SHOT YOU... CERTAIN YOU WERE DEAD! BUT BEFORE I COULD GO FOR YOUR HIDDEN MONEY, THE FIRST MAN ENTERED! IF HE LEARNED YOU WERE DEAD, I'D HAVE NO CHANCE TO ESCAPE WITH THE MONEY! JUST AS IN THE SEANCES I WAS THE "VOICE FROM BEYOND", SO NOW I USED VENTRILOQUISM TO TRICK HIM! THEN A SECOND MAN ENTERED! I HID, TURNING OFF THE LIGHTS, HOPING TO SCARE HIM OFF...



BUT YOU **DIDN'T** SCARE HIM OFF! THE GYPSY IS DEAD... BUT TWO CAN PLAY THIS VENTRILOQUISM GAME!



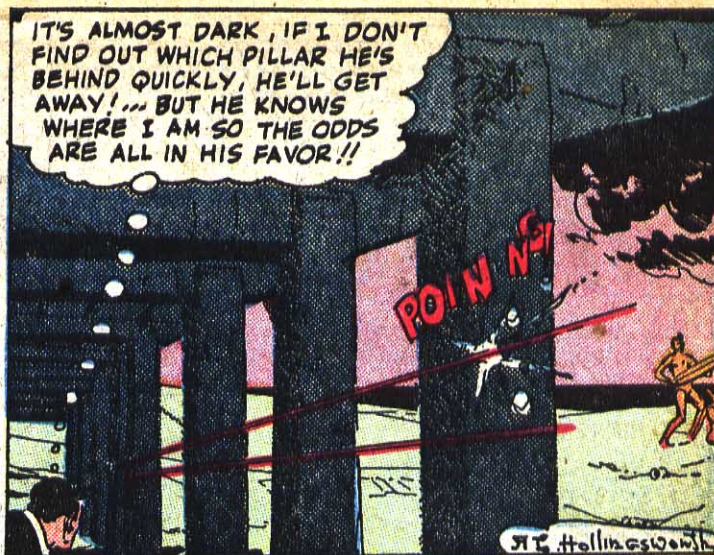
BUT BEFORE DETECTIVE DAY CAN REACH FOR HIS GUN, THE GYPSY ASSISTANT BLOWS OUT THE CANDLE...



DOWN THE TRAP DOOR STEPS, DETECTIVE DAY CHASES THE CUNNING GYPSY, AS SHOTS CUT CLOSE...

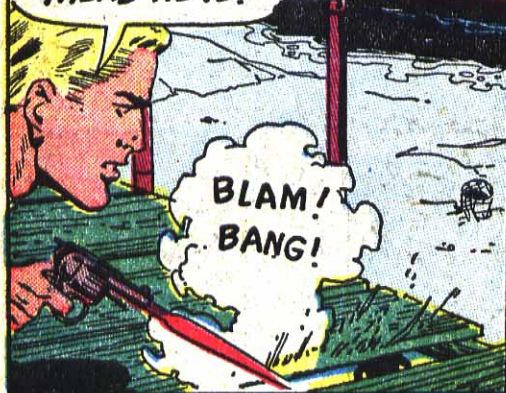


IT'S ALMOST DARK, IF I DON'T FIND OUT WHICH PILLAR HE'S BEHIND QUICKLY, HE'LL GET AWAY!... BUT HE KNOWS WHERE I AM SO THE ODDS ARE ALL IN HIS FAVOR!!



BUT AS THE GUNSHOT'S ECHO FADES, THE ROOKIE DETECTIVE RACES UP..

THE SHOTS CAME FROM UNDER THE BOARDWALK.. THERE HE IS!



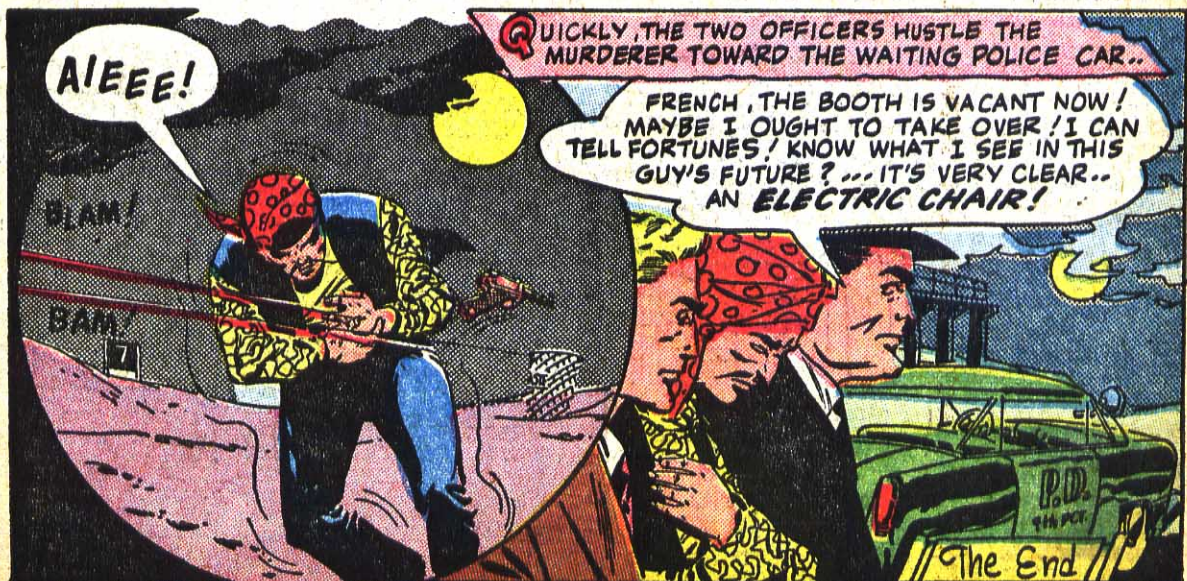
SOMEONE'S FIRING AT HIM FROM ABOVE..THE SQUEEZE PLAY IS ON AND THAT CREEP IS OUT!



AIEEE!

QUICKLY, THE TWO OFFICERS HUSTLE THE MURDERER TOWARD THE WAITING POLICE CAR..

FRENCH, THE BOOTH IS VACANT NOW! MAYBE I OUGHT TO TAKE OVER! I CAN TELL FORTUNES! KNOW WHAT I SEE IN THIS GUY'S FUTURE? ... IT'S VERY CLEAR.. AN **ELECTRIC CHAIR!**



The End

THE CLUE TO THE LURID CRIMES LAY IN THE WARPED MIND OF ONE MAN, BUT WHEN INSPECTOR KENT FINALLY FOUND THAT CLUE, THE MAD KILLER HAD STRUCK AGAIN, LEAVING ONLY...

The Murdered Murderer

TWO MURDER VICTIMS AND STILL NO KILLER, KENT! YOU'D BETTER FIND HIM FAST OR--

YOU'RE RIGHT, CHIEF! I'D BETTER! BECAUSE I'M TAKING THE NEXT VICTIM'S PLACE AND IF I DON'T CATCH THE MURDERER FIRST, I'LL BE STRETCHED OUT ON A COLD SLAB, TOO!



THERE IS A WRENCHING SOUND AT THE DOOR TO TED TYRELL'S GAME TROPHY-LINED APARTMENT AND THE ADVENTURER LOOKS UP FROM HIS BOOK IN STARK TERROR...

W-WHAT THE DEVIL ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHO ARE YOU?

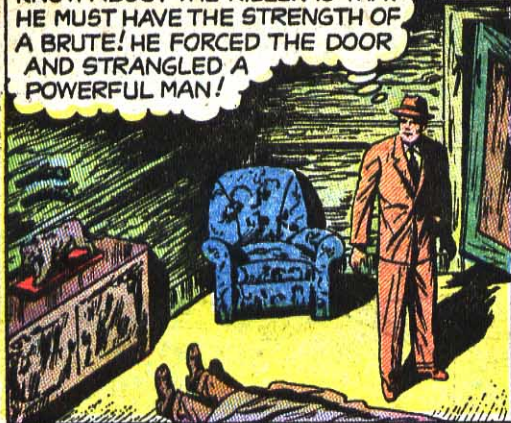


TRANCE-LIKE, THE WEIRD INTRUDER SHUFFLES TO THE STARTLED TYRELL, HIS HANDS CLOSING ABOUT THE MAN'S THROAT! TYRELL STRUGGLES DESPERATELY TO BREAK THE STRANGLING GRIP, BUT NOTHING CAN WEAKEN THE HOLD OF THE INTRUDER, WHOSE DAZED EYES SEEMED FILLED WITH BUT ONE DESIRE-- TO KILL...



THE NEXT MORNING, THE CLEANING WOMAN DISCOVERS THE CORPSE AND INSPECTOR KENT CAREFULLY CHECKS THE MURDER ROOM...

NOT A CLUE! THE ONLY THING I KNOW ABOUT THE KILLER IS THAT HE MUST HAVE THE STRENGTH OF A BRUTE! HE FORCED THE DOOR AND STRANGLED A POWERFUL MAN!



INSPECTOR, THE ONLY LEAD I'VE FOUND IS THIS WOMAN! SAYS SHE SAW A MAN WHO LOOKED LIKE A **ZOMBIE--**

THANK YOU, OFFICER! THERE'S ALWAYS SOMEONE AT THE SCENE OF EVERY CRIME WHO SEES ONE! NOW THAT'S OUT OF THE WAY, I CAN GO ON WITH THE CASE!



AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, INSPECTOR KENT ASSEMBLES THE DEAD MAN'S CLOSEST FRIENDS...

LET DR. FERRIS TELL YOU OUR RELATIONSHIP, INSPECTOR!

IT'S VERY SIMPLE--WE FOUR HEARD OF A **TREASURE MAP** POOLED OUR MONEY, FORMED A SYNDICATE TO BUY THE MAP AND MAKE THE SEARCH FOR THE TREASURE!



A TREASURE HUNT? RATHER UNUSUAL FOR A DOCTOR!

WELL, NO ONE EVER STRUCK GOLD IN MY FIELD--PSYCHIATRY! THE FOUR OF US WERE CASUALLY ACQUAINTED! MR. DALT HEARD OF THE MAP AND KNEW NONE OF US COULD AFFORD IT ALONE!



I AND NORTON ARE WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL PROFESSIONAL ADVENTURERS--HUNTED, EXPLORED, A BIT OF ARCHEOLOGY! TYRELL WAS AN AMATEUR MOUNTAINEER!...WE ALL LIKED HIM VERY MUCH!

THANK YOU, GENTLEMEN! THAT'S ALL!



TWO NIGHTS LATER, AS DALT HURRIES TO MEET THE OTHER TWO MEN TO MAKE PLANS FOR THE COMING SEARCH, SUDDENLY, OUT OF THE INKY SHADOWS OF A SILENT ALLEY, SOMETHING MOVES...



N-NO!
NO!



THE FINGERS TIGHTEN, THE ADVENTURER GASPS IN VAIN FOR BREATH AS THE ATTACKER STARES WITH PITILESS EYES AT THE DYING MAN...



AN HOUR LATER, POLICE SIRENS WAIL, AS INSPECTOR KENT OF HOMICIDE BENDS OVER THE LIFELESS BODY...

DALT!...THE SECOND OF THE TREASURE SYNDICATE AND FROM THOSE MARKS AROUND HIS THROAT, IT'S THE WORK OF THE SAME KILLER!



NO ONE SAW ANYTHING... EXCEPT ONE MAN WHO WAS OPENING HIS WINDOW THAT FACES THIS ALLEY! SAID HE SAW A WEIRD-LOOKING GUY--SEEMED TO MOVE LIKE ONE OF THOSE MOVIE ZOMBIES!

HMMM, IT *MIGHT* TIE IN WITH THAT OLD WOMAN'S REPORT AT THE OTHER MURDER!



SOON AFTER, MR. NORTON AND DR. FERRIS ARE BROUGHT IN FOR QUESTIONING...

WE PLANNED TO DINE AT THE RITZ AND DISCUSS OUR SEARCH PLANS! WHEN DALT DIDN'T COME, WE WENT AHEAD AND ATE, NEVER IMAGINING AT THAT TIME HE...

WE'LL CHECK WITH THE HOTEL! BUT IT'S OBVIOUS NEITHER OF YOU WERE AT THE MURDER SCENE!



THE NEXT MORNING, IN THE CLEAR LIGHT OF DAY, INSPECTOR KENT EXAMINES THE ROPED-OFF ALLEY...

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT! THESE LARGE FOOT-PRINTS ARE THE MURDERER'S! BUT THE DISTANCE BETWEEN STEPS COMING AND GOING DOWN THIS ALLEY IS THE *SAME*! A *NORMAL* MAN WOULD HAVE RUN OR WALKED HURRIEDLY FROM THE CORPSE--LEAVING A *GREATER* DISTANCE BETWEEN HIS DEPARTING STEPS!



THE MURDERER *WASN'T* A NORMAL MAN!
THAT MAY BE THE CLUE I NEED! NOW TO
DO SOME FAST CHECKING!



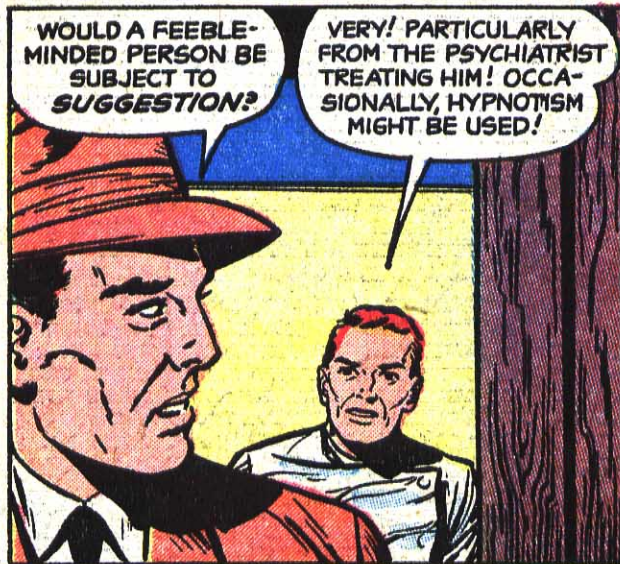
**QUICKLY, INSPECTOR KENT GOES DOWN
TO CITY HOSPITAL...**

YES, WE HAVE THE INFORMATION ON DR. FERRIS,
INSPECTOR! HE IS A WELL-TRAINED AND
HIGHLY RECOMMENDED PSYCHIATRIST!
HE SPECIALIZES IN TREATING THE
FEEBLE-MINDED!



WOULD A FEEBLE-
MINDED PERSON BE
SUBJECT TO
SUGGESTION?

VERY! PARTICULARLY
FROM THE PSYCHIATRIST
TREATING HIM! OCCA-
SIONALLY, HYPNOTISM
MIGHT BE USED!



**INSPECTOR KENT RAPIDLY THUMBS
THROUGH A PHONE DIRECTORY AND
CALLS MR. NORTON...**

YOU JUST CAUGHT ME ON
THE WAY OUT, INSPECTOR!
I WASN'T PLANNING ON
RETURNING HOME UNTIL
AFTER I HAD MET WITH
DR. FERRIS TONIGHT!

TONIGHT? AT
WHAT TIME
AND HOW WOULD
YOU GO TO YOUR
MEETING PLACE?



WE WERE TO
MEET AT EIGHT FOR
DINNER AT THE RAIN-
BOW CLUB! I GUESS
I'D GO BY WAY OF
FOURTEENTH
STREET--

DON'T! NO
MATTER WHAT
HAPPENS, *DON'T*
GO THERE TONIGHT!
I WILL GO IN
YOUR PLACE!



**THAT NIGHT, AS A FINE DRIZZLE EMPTIES
THE DARK STREETS, INSPECTOR KENT AND A
POLICEMAN WALK TO AN
UNCERTAIN RENDEZVOUS...**

MISTING UP A
BIT, SIR! KIND
OF HARD
TO SEE!

KEEP YOUR
EYES OPEN!
IF WHAT I
THINK IS GOING
TO HAPPEN DOES--
OUR ONLY SAFETY
LIES IN SEEING
OUR DANGER FIRST!





LOOK!
THERE!

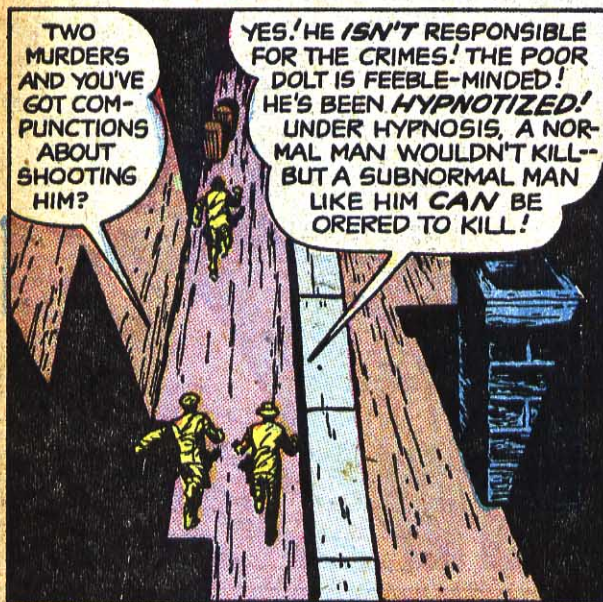
H-HE ISN'T
HUMAN!



AS THE TWO MEN TURN DOWN THE ALLEY, THE AMBUSER TURNS TO FLEE AS SOME INSTINCT OF SELF-PRESERVATION ALERTS HIM TO THE DANGER OF BEING CAUGHT...

HE'S TAKING OFF!
BUT I'LL DROP
HIM BEFORE HE
GETS FAR!

NO! DON'T SHOOT!
HE'S COMMITTED
TWO MURDERS--
BUT **DON'T SHOOT!**



TWO
MURDERS
AND YOU'VE
GOT COM-
PUNCTIONS
ABOUT
SHOOTING
HIM?

YES! HE *ISN'T* RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE CRIMES! THE POOR
DOLT IS FEEBLE-MINDED!
HE'S BEEN **HYPNOTIZED!**
UNDER HYPNOSIS, A NOR-
MAL MAN WOULDN'T KILL--
BUT A SUBNORMAL MAN
LIKE HIM **CAN** BE
ORDERED TO KILL!

BUT AS THE TWO OFFICERS CLOSE IN, THE HUNTED KILLER TRIES TO BLOCK THEIR PATH...



FEEBLE-MINDED, IS HE? CLEVER ENOUGH TO
GIVE US THE SLIP!

PUT IT DOWN TO ANIMAL CUN-
NING! I KNOW HE'S HEADING
FOR DR. FERRIS'S HOME--
BUT I WANT TO GET THERE
FIRST!

AND AT THAT MOMENT, DR. FERRIS' EYES NARROW IN A LOOK OF MAD TRIUMPH.

IT TOOK FOUR MEN TO BUY THIS--
BUT TONIGHT, ONLY **ONE** WILL BE
LEFT ALIVE TO USE IT! IF NORTON
KEPT THE FALSE APPOINTMENT,
THE TREASURE MAP IS **MINE!**



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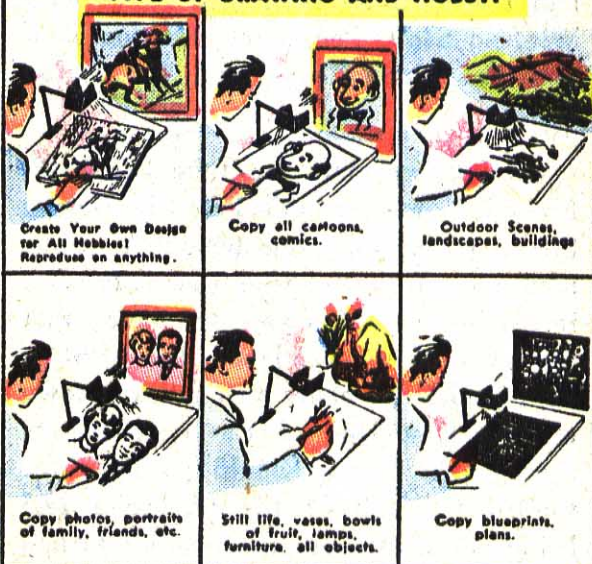
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FACT INTO FICTION

IN the summer of 1842, there occurred what became one of the most celebrated in all the long list of New York's murder mysteries, thanks to the pen of no less a personage than Edgar Allan Poe.

The victim was Mary Cecilia Rogers, 22 years old, and famous throughout the city for her remarkable beauty. She lived with her widowed mother and sold cigars in a store at Broadway and Duane Street. The establishment was patronized by many of the most prominent men of the day, and Mary Rogers was known, admired and respected by such men as General Winfield Scott, Poe, James Gordon Bennett, Fennimore Cooper and Washington Irving.

On Sunday morning, June 22, 1842, Mary left her mother's home in Nassau Street, telling only one person, a young man named Payne, who was a boarder in her home and her accepted fiance, that she planned to spend the day with an aunt who lived about two miles uptown on the west side of the city. It was agreed that Payne should go up there toward the end of the afternoon and bring her home. But the weather turned out to be so rainy that he did not keep the engagement.

Mary did not come home that night and the next day it was learned that she had not been at her aunt's home on Sunday. About a year previously the girl had been absent from her home for a week and had offered no explanation upon her return. So her friends at first prosecuted their inquiries very quietly. Those most active in the search were Payne and a middle-aged busybody of

a man named Crommelin, who had long been an ardent but platonic admirer of the beautiful cigar girl.

All through Monday and Tuesday the two men hunted vainly for some clue. On Wednesday, circling further afield, Crommelin heard that river boatmen of what were then the wilds of Weehawken had dragged from the water the floating body of a woman. He went over and found Mary Rogers.

The face of the dead girl was suffused with dark blood. There were bruises and finger marks on the flesh of her throat, which was so much swollen that some time elapsed before it was discovered that she had been strangled with a strip of lace and cloth torn from her clothing and tied tightly around her neck. From the front of her dress skirt an oblong piece had been torn and knotted around her waist, while a similar portion torn from the front of the underskirt was knotted loosely around her neck. Her bonnet was on her head and its strings were tied in what was described as a sailor's knot rather than such a one as a woman would tie.

Crommelin made a positive identification of the body and then was guilty of the first of a series of muddleheaded mistakes by insisting that it should be immediately buried near the spot where it was found. For a time he became the focus of a tremendous popular excitement. The girl's beauty had been so famous and her taking off so atrocious that the city was greatly stirred. Rewards aggregating six thousand dollars were im-

mediately offered for information leading to the identity of the murderer.

Payne also for a brief while diverted suspicion to himself by committing suicide with laudanum at the temporary grave of his dead sweetheart. But it was quickly realized that neither of these two men could have been guilty of the crime.

The next development in the case was furnished by an innkeeper, a woman, on the Weehawken shore who reported that on the Sunday afternoon when Mary disappeared a young girl and a "dark complexioned" man had stopped for refreshments at her place about three o'clock and then strolled on into the country. A little later, she said, a band of young thugs, who even then were a pest of the suburbs on holidays, had visited her inn, enjoyed her cakes and ale and left without paying. And some time after that, when it was getting dark, she had heard a woman scream somewhere in the neighborhood.

It happened that a few weeks before a married couple and their daughter, crossing the river in a hired boat for a Sunday afternoon outing, had been the victims of an atrocious assault. These two episodes were put together and the theory was advanced that Mary Rogers had fallen a victim to similar outlawry.

About three weeks had elapsed since the murder when small boys, playing in the woods near the Weehawken inn, found a collection of women's clothing in a secluded thicket. It included a white petticoat, a silk scarf, a parasol, a pair of gloves and a handkerchief bearing the dead girl's initials. They lay on a group of three stones and were covered with mildew. The soil showed signs of a desperate struggle and it was observed that

a crude path led from the spot to the river. There were signs of a heavy burden being dragged along the ground and in several places fence rails had been taken down to afford easier passage.

All this was taken as confirmation of the thug theory. The outlaws had trailed Mary and her escort, driven her protector away, killed her, and dragged her body down to their boat, from which it had been thrown into the river.

The case had reached this point when Poe entered it. In a masterly reconstruction which included all the known evidence he transferred the crime to Paris as "The Mystery of Marie Roget." Bringing in the girl's earlier disappearance of a week, the "dark-complexioned man," the sailor's knot in the bonnet strings, and the fact that at the time of the murder a navy rowboat had been missed from the barge office and had mysteriously reappeared minus its rudder, he expounded the theory that Mary Rogers had a love affair with a member of the navy, probably an officer; that the pair had kept a clandestine tryst that Sunday afternoon, and that in a storm of anger or passion the man had killed her and later shrewdly cast suspicion elsewhere by depositing the clothing in the thicket after the mistress of the inn told her story of the thugs and the scream of a woman from the dark.

Poe's theory of the crime was the only one which accurately dovetailed all the evidence in the case. But it was never confirmed by further discoveries, and the murder of Mary Rogers, the beautiful cigar girl, remains as complete a mystery after over a century as it was when her tormented body was found floating in the Hudson River.

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**Bird
House**

IN A SMALL TOWN IN PENNSYLVANIA, **DAN BURNELL**, A NEW YORK PRIVATE DETECTIVE HAS LOCATED HIS QUARRY. HE HAS FOUND THE GIRL, **MAZIE DUGAN**, WORKING AS A WAITRESS AND HAS PERSUADED HER TO ACCOMPANY HIM BACK TO THE BIG CITY, WHERE HER TESTIMONY IS URGENTLY NEEDED IN A CRIMINAL CASE ABOUT TO GO TO TRIAL, AS THEY TAKE A CAB, BOUND FOR THE RAILROAD STATION, **LITTLE** DOES HE REALIZE THAT THIS ERRAND IS GOING TO BE PUNCTUATED BY THE GRIM FINGER OF DEATH ON ...

"The ROAD BACK"

SAM KERN HAS ALWAYS BEEN A GOOD FRIEND OF MINE. IF HE'S IN A JAM WITH THE LAW I'LL BE GLAD TO GO BACK TO NEW YORK TO TESTIFY FOR HIM.

ATTA GIRL. I KNEW YOU WOULD.

WHO SENT YOU TO FIND ME?

I REALLY DON'T KNOW-- A CALL CAME OVER THE PHONE, THEN A MESSENGER CAME TO MY OFFICE WITH INSTRUCTIONS AND A WAD OF DOUGH.

SAM'S IN A TIGHT SPOT. HIS GUN KILLED THE WATCHMAN IN A HOLD-UP AND ALL THE EVIDENCE IS AGAINST HIM.

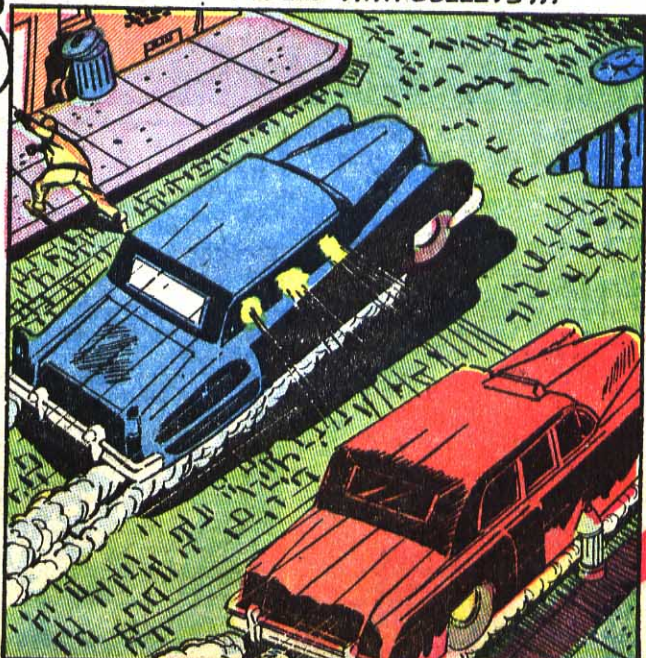
BUT SAM WAS WITH ME WHEN THAT HAPPENED. "SPIDER" MORELLI AND HIS MIDTOWN MOB PULLED THAT JOB.



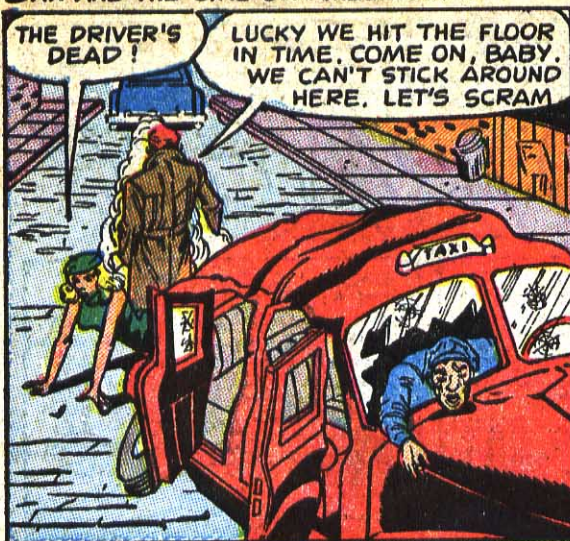
A STRANGE CAR PULLS ALONGSIDE ...

THEN YOU CAN PROVIDE AN ALIBI FOR YOUR FRIEND SAM AND SAVE HIM FROM THE HOT SEAT -- **HEY-- DUCK!**

TOMMY GUNS BLAZE FROM THE NEIGHBORING CAR AND THE CAB IS RIDDLED WITH BULLETS ...



DAN AND THE GIRL SCRAMBLE OUT...



BUT HE MEETS UNEXPECTED RESISTANCE...



DAN FINALLY CALMS THE HYSTERICAL GIRL AND HERDS HER ONTO THE TRAIN...



I SEE IT ALL NOW. "SPIDER" HIMSELF WAS THE ONE WHO HIRED ME TO FIND YOU AND BRING YOU BACK.

BUT I WOULD GIVE SAM KERN THE ALIBI HE NEEDS AND THAT IS NOT WHAT "SPIDER" WANTS AT ALL.

HE DIDN'T PLAN FOR YOU TO GET TO THE WITNESS STAND. HE JUST WANTED ME TO PUT THE FINGER ON YOU SO HE COULD GET YOU OUT OF THE WAY. I'M GLAD I ARRANGED FOR A POLICE GUARD WHEN WE GET TO NEW YORK.

AFTER HOURS OF TRAVELLING...

I'M GOING OUT FOR A LITTLE WHILE. I'LL LOCK THE DOOR SO NOBODY CAN COME IN AND BOTHER YOU.



DAN LOCKS THE COMPARTMENT...

...THEN HE RELAXES IN THE CLUB CAR FOR A WHILE ...

SHE'LL BE SAFE HERE TIL I GET BACK--



LATER ...

I'D BETTER BE GETTING BACK--



UPON RETURNING, HE NOTICES THAT THE COMPARTMENT DOOR IS OPEN...

SAY-Y-- SOMETHING'S WRONG!

DAN IS APPALLED TO FIND MAZIE STABBED TO DEATH AND NEAR THE BODY STANDS A STRANGE YOUNG WOMAN WHOM HE AT ONCE ACCUSES...



I SUPPOSE YOU'RE ONE OF "SPIDER'S" MOB!

N-NO! SHE'S DEAD BUT I DIDN'T KILL HER. I SWEAR IT!





I FOUND THE DOOR OPEN -
CAME IN AND FOUND HER
LIKE THIS. I'M INNOCENT,
MR. BURNELL.

YOU EVEN
KNOW MY
NAME. DON'T
TRY TO KID ME!



I KNOW YOU BECAUSE I'VE SEEN YOUR PICTURE
IN THE NEW YORK PAPERS. I'M JUNE DALY,
A REPORTER FOR "STAR FEATURES". I WAS
ASSIGNED TO GET A STORY ON MAZIE
DUGAN'S ROMANCE WITH SAM KERN. I
SAW YOU TWO GET ON THE TRAIN, SO I
WAITED ...



AND WHEN I SAW YOU IN
THE CLUB CAR, I FIGURED
I HAD A CHANCE TO TALK
TO MAZIE. I FOUND HER
DEAD JUST BEFORE YOU
CAME BACK.



ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT!
WHERE WERE YOU RIDING
ON THIS
TRAIN?

I HAVE A COMPARTMENT
NEAR
THE OTHER END
OF THIS CAR.



WE'LL GO THERE AND TALK.
THIS ROOM GIVES ME THE
CREEPS.

OKAY-IF I CAN
HELP YOU.

**As they go down the dimly-lit aisle,
something brushes against Dan's legs...**



WHAT'S THAT? - SOME
GUY SLEEPING --

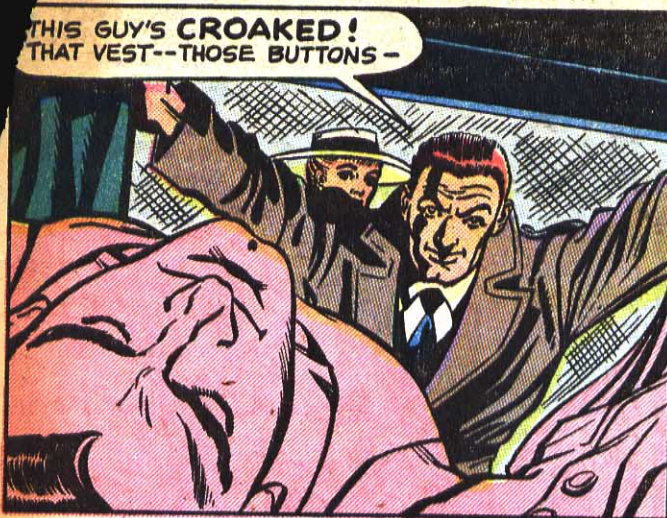
**When he shoves the hand aside, he
sees that it is covered with blood...**



HEY!

OPENING THE CURTAINS OF THE BERTH, DAN SEES
A MAN'S BODY, IN UNDERWEAR—AND A VEST...

THIS GUY'S CROAKED!
THAT VEST--THOSE BUTTONS—



AT THE ENTRANCE TO JUNE DALY'S
COMPARTMENT, DAN COMMANDS...

GET IN HERE AND LOCK THE DOOR.
I'M GOING TO SPEAK TO THE CON-
DUCTOR.

O-O-KAY... IF YOU
SAY SO—



IN THE SMOKING CAR, DAN FINDS
THE CONDUCTOR COUNTING TICKETS...

I WANT TO TALK
TO YOU, CONDUCTOR.

WHAT CAN I
DO FOR YOU?



I'M A PRIVATE DETECTIVE, TAKING A GAL BACK TO NEW
YORK. SHE JUST GOT KNIFED. SHE'S DEAD, BUT I'VE GOT
A WITNESS WHO CAN IDENTIFY HER KILLER. THIS PARTY
IS TRAVELING IN COMPARTMENT FOUR. I DON'T WANT
HER TO BE DISTURBED.

WHAT?



BACK IN JUNE'S COMPARTMENT...

STUFF THESE
PILLOWS TO LOOK
LIKE A PERSON
ASLEEP.

WHY ARE
YOU DOING
THIS?



I EXPECT A VISITOR. NOW
WE'LL LOCK THE DOOR, PUT
THE LIGHT OUT—AND WAIT.



LATER, AS THE TRAIN ROLLS
THROUGH THE NIGHT, A KEY
TURNS IN THE LOCK AND THE
DOOR IS QUIETLY OPENED...

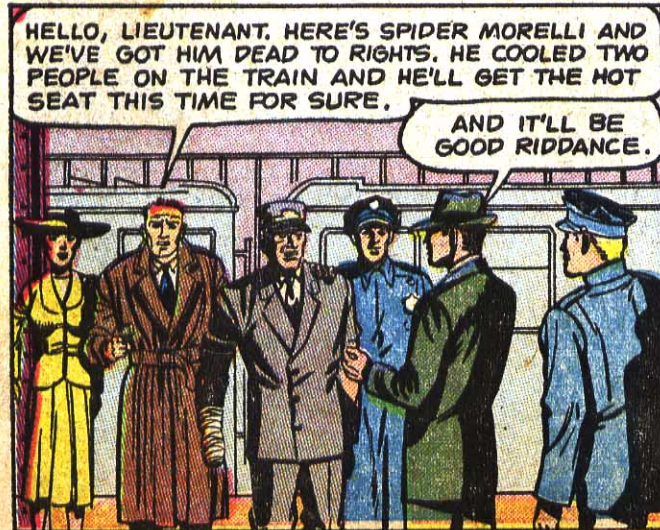


DAN SNAPS ON THE LIGHT AS A KNIFE RIPS VICIOUSLY INTO THE BUNDLE OF PILLOWS PILED IN THE BERTH...

SAVAGELY, THE MAN TURNS HIS KNIFE ON THE DETECTIVE BUT DAN'S GUN BARKS FIRST...



WHEN THE TRAIN REACHES NEW YORK...



THE END